

Raised Beds and Composting 2021

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Raised Beds

Need a good location, sunlight for 5+ hours per day, good soil, moisture and mulch.

Sometimes the depth of the bed is very important. Ex tomatoes vs potatoes

Advantages: increase production while decreasing garden area

Raised beds drain better and warm up earlier in the spring.

You can easily work with the soil, mulch stays put, easier access to your plants, EASY to weed!, they are pretty, easy to water, harder for animals to eat plants.

Sizes and Plants

Raised beds should not be more than 4 feet wide (you cannot reach your plants if they are any wider)

4x8 is a great starting size.

Filling the bed with soil can be expensive the first time. But you only have to do it once. Add soils/compost on top for the following years to keep good soil health. Mulch also breaks down, adding nutrients.

Permaculture design encourages using sticks and logs to fill the bottom of a new bed.

Compost

What is it? It's organic material that has been broken down.

Using compost can help fill a new bed or add nutrients to an established one.

You can compost nearly everything: sticks, cardboard, grass, greens, food scraps, chicken-rabbit-horse manure, shredded paper, flyers, most junk mail, coffee grounds and filters and the non-diseased yard waste.

Making compost keeps this material out of the landfills, it's great for your soil, and it's FREE!

Benefits of Composting

Holds moisture in the soil, builds soil structure: healthy soil- healthy plants, suppresses plant disease and weeds (yay!)

How to Get Started:

Requires 4 basic ingredients:

Browns: dead leaves, branches, twigs

Greens: grass clippings, vegetable waste, fruit scraps and coffee grounds

Water: composting organisms need a moist environment

Air: Air circulation allows the organisms the oxygen they need to live. Air also keeps the pile from producing a foul odor.

Comfrey:

Caring for Compost:

Keep it moist and add water during dry times.

Mix it up, keep a good combination of ingredients (*browns and greens*), don't use chemicals, it should get really hot, it should not smell, give it time to break down.

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxijblcUeLY>

<https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/raised-bed-basics/8565.html>

<https://www.almanac.com/content/how-build-raised-garden-bed>

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>

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